A man with a beard, wearing a plaid hat and yellow gloves, is shown in profile, using a paintbrush to paint a duck on a tree trunk. The background is a blurred forest scene.

Duck Hunting

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by Thomas K. Adamson



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Wild Outdoors

Duck Hunting

by Thomas K. Adamson

Reading Consultant: Barbara J. Fox
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Next Generation Hunting
Bowling Green, Kentucky

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Chapter 1

Take Aim!

You and a friend wait patiently in the brush near open water. A group of mallard ducks flies low across the sky. They fly toward your location, but you don't fire.

Wild Fact:

Puddle ducks include the black duck, mallard, pintail, and wood duck. Puddle ducks are found in rivers and ponds.





Wild Fact:

Diving ducks include the scamp, canvasback, redhead, goldeneye, and bufflehead. These ducks dive underwater to get food.

The ducks circle around and fly closer to your spot. You both take aim and fire. Two ducks drop into the water. Success!

mallard



Chapter 2

Getting Ready

Hunters bring down ducks with shotguns. These guns fire shells filled with small beads called **shot**. Shotguns are best at close **range**. With shotguns, hunters can hit ducks less than 50 yards (46 meters) away.

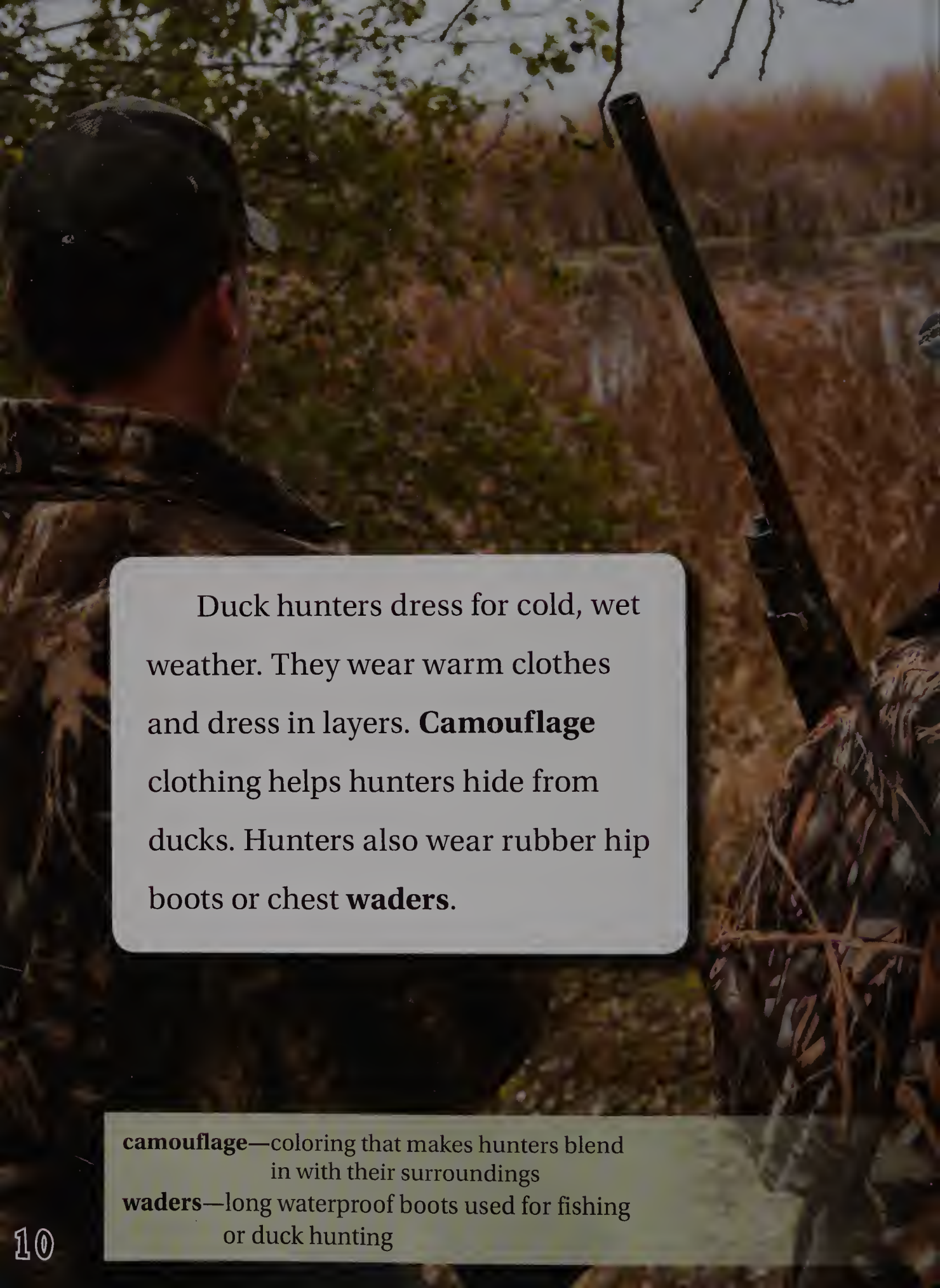
shot—lead or steel pellets that can be fired from a shotgun

range—the greatest distance ammunition can travel to reach its target

Wild Fact:

Shot travels more than 1,200 feet (366 meters) per second.

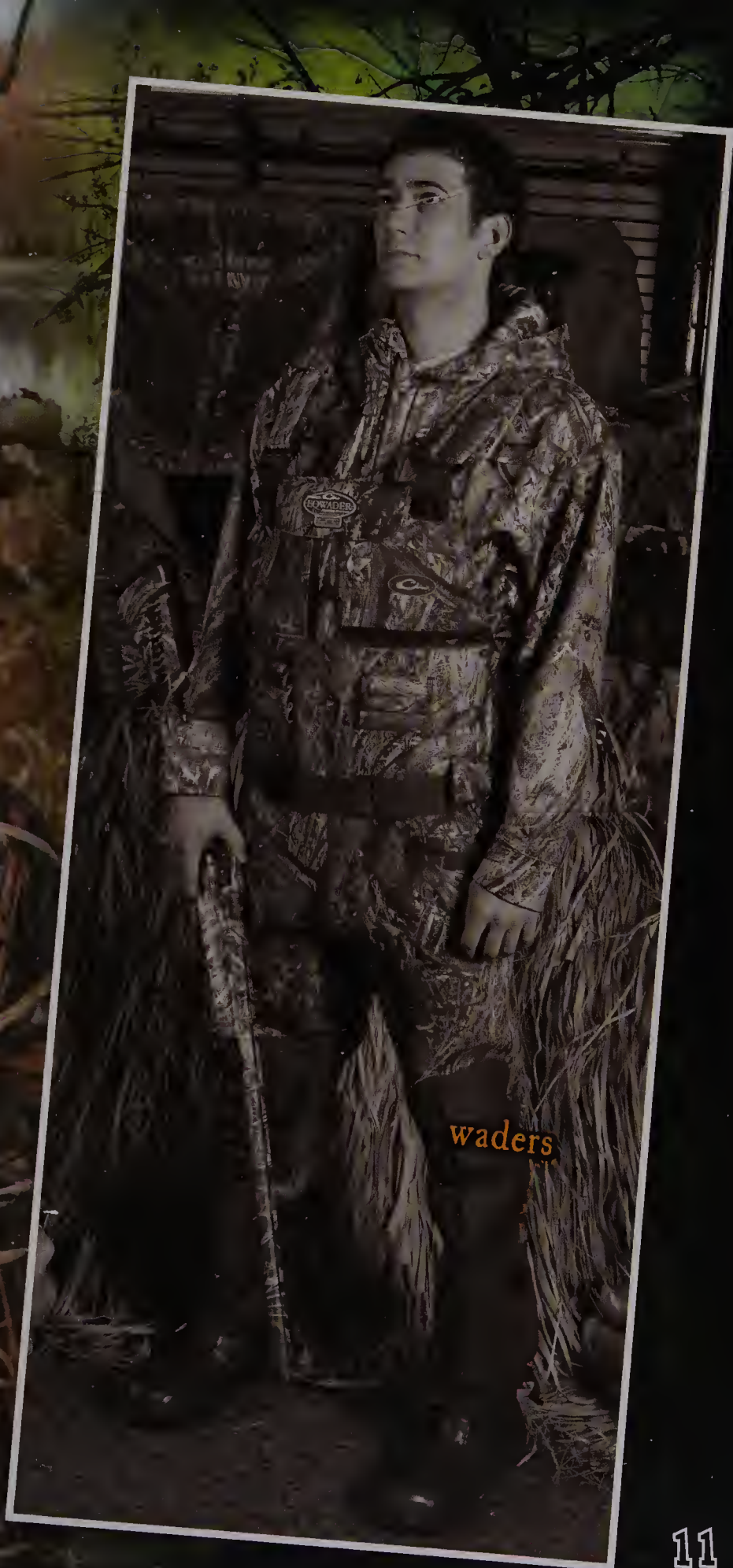




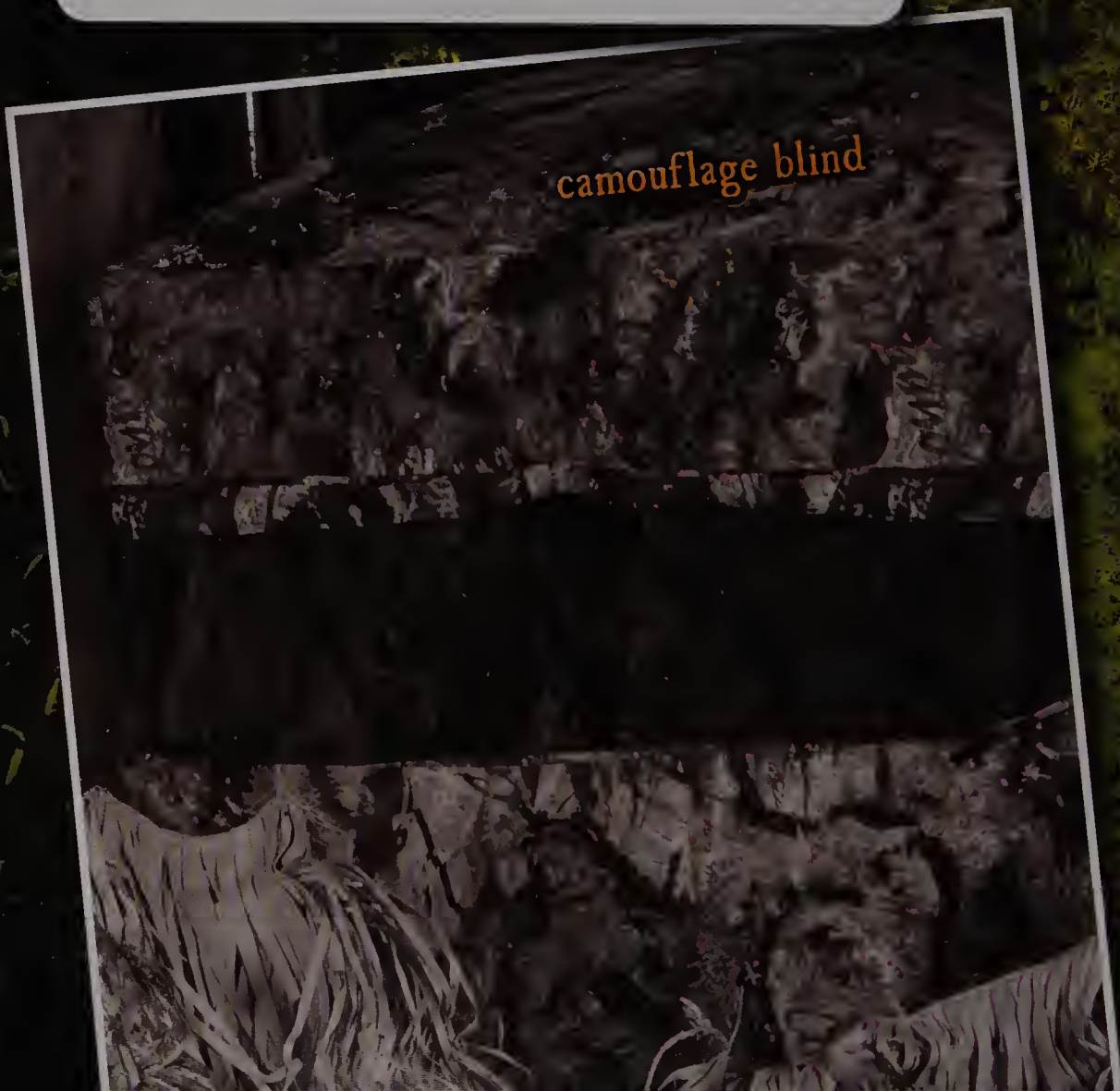
Duck hunters dress for cold, wet weather. They wear warm clothes and dress in layers. **Camouflage** clothing helps hunters hide from ducks. Hunters also wear rubber hip boots or chest **waders**.

camouflage—coloring that makes hunters blend in with their surroundings

waders—long waterproof boots used for fishing or duck hunting



Hunters use **blinds** to stay hidden from ducks. Hunters cover blinds with grass, leaves, or tall weeds. Some hunters buy blinds that are covered with camouflage.





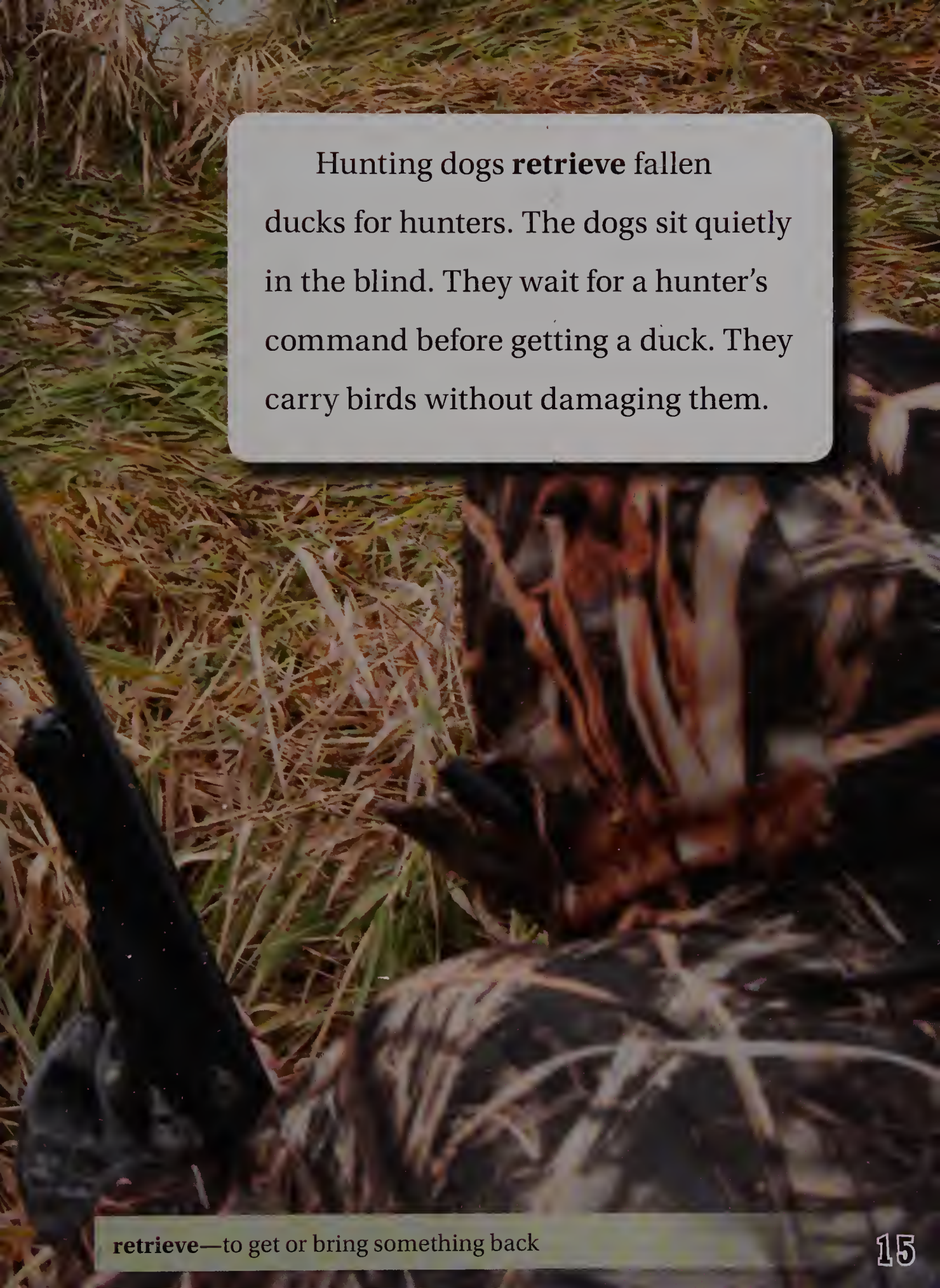
blind

blind— a hidden place from which hunters can shoot prey



Wild Fact:

Hunting dogs are trained to get used to the sound of gunfire.

A photograph of a hunting dog, likely a retriever, in a field of tall, dry grass. The dog is dark-colored and is positioned in the lower right of the frame, looking towards the left. In the background, a duck is visible, and another duck is partially visible on the right side of the image. The scene is set in a natural, outdoor environment.

Hunting dogs **retrieve** fallen ducks for hunters. The dogs sit quietly in the blind. They wait for a hunter's command before getting a duck. They carry birds without damaging them.

Duck Hunting Equipment

decoys

face
mask



camouflage
clothing

duck
blind

boots

binoculars

waders

shotgun

calls

BOWTECH

hunting
license

shells

Chapter 3

Skills and Techniques

Hunters use **decoys** to attract ducks. The plastic or wooden decoys look like real ducks. Hunters place decoys near their blinds. They spread out the decoys so ducks have room to land.

decoy—a model of a duck used to attract real ducks



decoys

Wild Fact:

Some decoys look like ducks sleeping or eating.

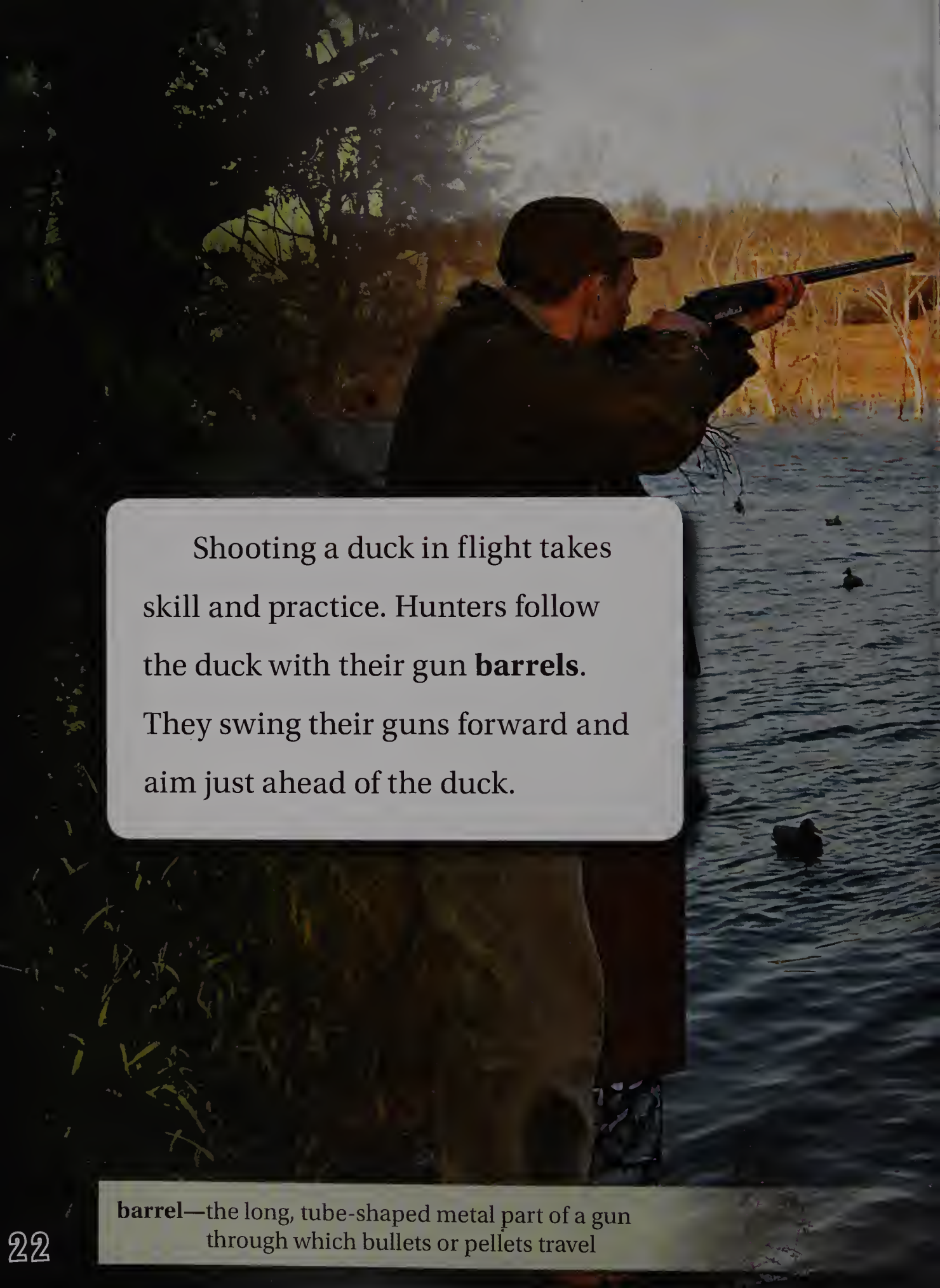
A close-up, profile shot of a man wearing a camouflage baseball cap, drinking from a clear plastic water bottle. The bottle has a blue label with a duck on it. The bottle is connected to a yellow water bladder. The man is holding a rope with a metal shackle that has the number '23' on it. The background is blurred, showing some foliage.

Wild Fact:

A duck makes a chuckle sound when eating.

Hunters fool ducks by using **calls**. Ducks make different sounds when eating and mating. Hunters copy these sounds with duck calls. Hunters practice calls to get the right sounds.



A photograph of a hunter in a cap and jacket aiming a shotgun at ducks in a marshy field. The hunter is positioned on the left, facing right, with the shotgun held up to his eye. The background shows a body of water with several ducks swimming. The scene is set in a natural, outdoor environment with some trees and reeds visible.

Shooting a duck in flight takes skill and practice. Hunters follow the duck with their gun **barrels**. They swing their guns forward and aim just ahead of the duck.

barrel—the long, tube-shaped metal part of a gun through which bullets or pellets travel



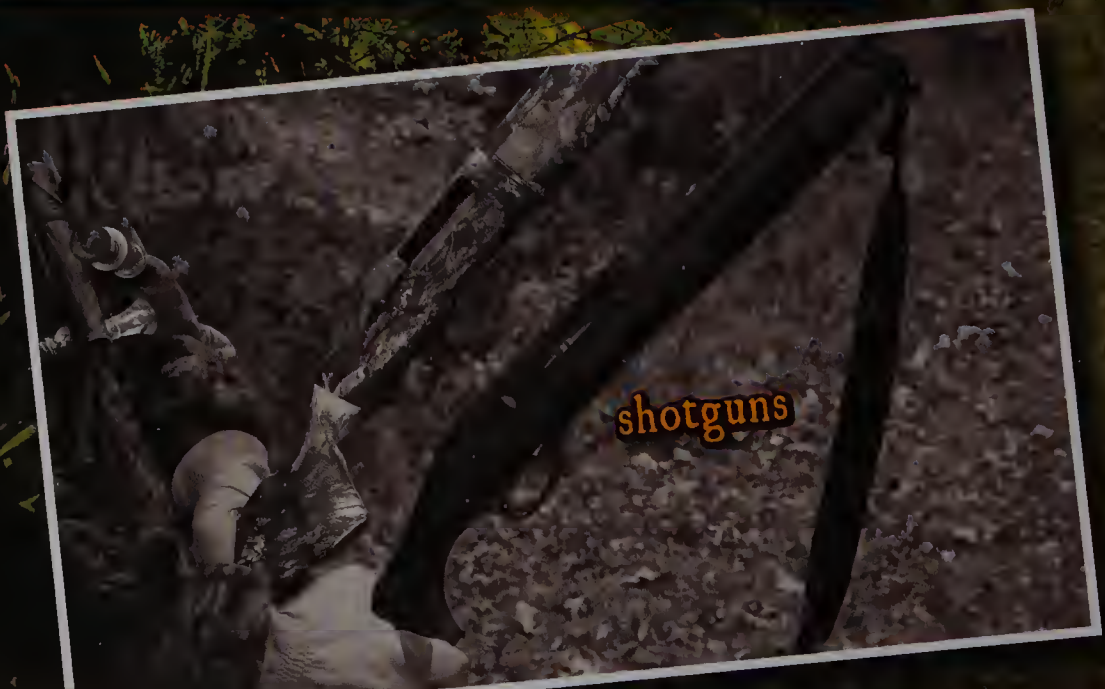
Wild Fact:

Hunters of both ducks and geese are called waterfowlers.

Chapter 4

Be Safe

For duck hunters, nothing is more important than using guns safely. Hunters never point guns at other people. Hunters keep the gun **safety** on until they are ready to shoot.

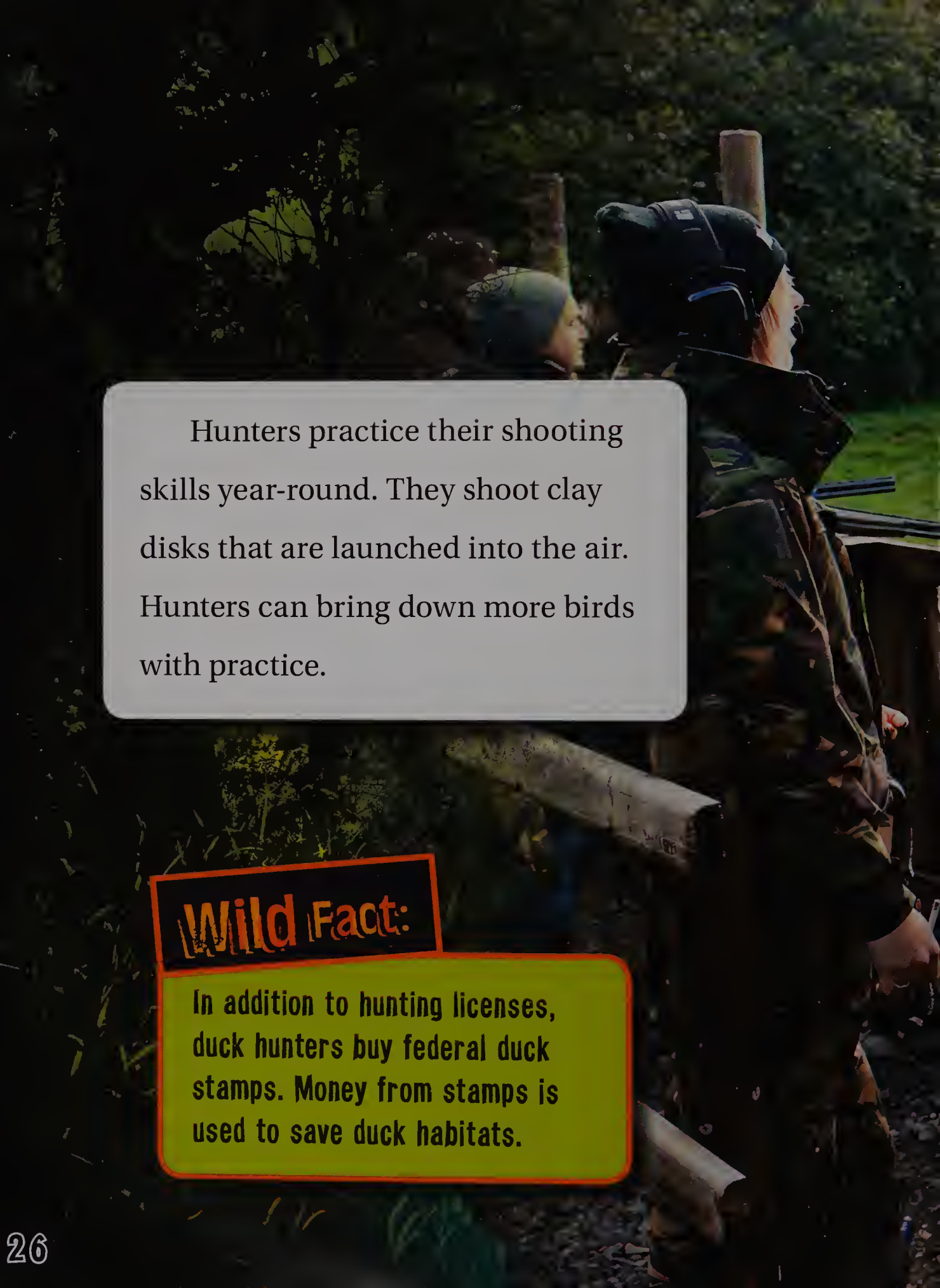


safety—a device that prevents a gun from firing

A photograph of a hunter in camouflage gear, including a hat and jacket, standing in a field of tall grass and brush. The hunter is holding a rifle and looking towards the left. The background is filled with dense vegetation and trees.

Wild Fact:

Hunters keep their guns unloaded until they are out hunting. They unload their guns when they are done hunting.

A photograph of two hunters in camouflage gear and hats, looking through a wooden structure, possibly a blind, in a field. The background is a dense line of trees.

Hunters practice their shooting skills year-round. They shoot clay disks that are launched into the air. Hunters can bring down more birds with practice.

Wild Fact:

In addition to hunting licenses, duck hunters buy federal duck stamps. Money from stamps is used to save duck habitats.



A wooden sign with a curved top, hanging from two metal chains. The sign is dark brown with the text 'Chapter 5' and 'Bag Some Ducks!' in a stylized font. The background is a field of tall, green grass.

Chapter 5

Bag Some Ducks!

Think you can outsmart a duck? You have to start early in the morning. You may have to brave the cold, wet weather. But the thrill of bagging some ducks can't be beat!



Glossary

barrel (BAYR-uhl)—the long, tube-shaped metal part of a gun through which bullets or pellets travel

blind (BLYND)—a hidden place from which hunters can shoot prey

call (KAWL)—a device that makes sounds like a duck

camouflage (KA-muh-flahzh)—coloring that makes hunters blend in with their surroundings

decoy (DEE-koy)—a model of a duck used to attract real ducks

range (RAYNJ)—the greatest distance ammunition can travel to reach its target

retrieve (ri-TREEV)—to get or bring something back

safety (SAYF-tee)—a device that prevents a gun from firing

shot (SHOT)—lead or steel pellets that can be fired from a shotgun

waders (WAY-durz)—long waterproof boots used for fishing or duck hunting

Read More

Frahm, Randy. *Duck Hunting.* The Great Outdoors. Mankato, Minn.: Capstone Press, 2008.

Lewis, Joan. *Hunting.* Get Going! Hobbies. Chicago: Heinemann Library, 2006.

Wilson, Jef. *Hunting for Fun!* For Fun! Minneapolis: Compass Point Books, 2006.

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Wild
Outdoors

Duck Hunting

**TITLES IN
THIS SET:**

Bowhunting
Deer Hunting
Duck Hunting
Freshwater Fishing

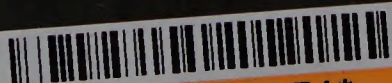
A hunter takes aim at a group of mallards. Did the hunter hit the mark? Duck hunters know that a successful hunt takes skill, patience, and the right equipment. Get the inside information on the guns, decoys, and safety skills you'll need to bring home your limit of ducks.

Wilderness trails. Huge deer. Record trout. There's always an adventure waiting in the wild outdoors. Engaging text and photos highlight the equipment, techniques, and safety skills you'll need to enjoy hunting or fishing in the wilderness. Grab your gear and get ready to explore the wild outdoors!

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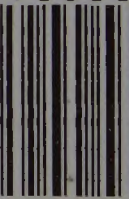
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